There is no specific legislation governing continuing teacher education and training. Teachers are obligated to participate in continuing professional development (CPD) training for one or five days a year according to the relevant statutes and collective agreements. Teachers have the right to participate in this obligatory training with full salary benefits. On the other hand, employers have the right to assign all full-time teachers to training. Employers also decide which training programmes and forms of education can be accepted as CPD training conforming to the collective agreement.

The primary responsibility for CPD lies with the education providers. Today teachers themselves have been given greater responsibility for developing their professional skills and expertise. More and more attention is being paid to self-motivated continuing education and training and local authorities support it within their financial limits and with financial support from the State.

The State funds continuing education related to education policy and reform

The State is primarily responsible for funding continuing education that is important for implementing education policy and which promotes its aims. Most of the funding is channelled through the Finnish National Agency for Education and the Regional State Administrative Agencies. CPD for those providing teacher training is funded directly by the Ministry of Education and Culture on the basis of applications from these providers.

The Ministry of Education and Culture appointed a Teacher education forum for the term 2016-2018 to support the development of both pre-service and in-service training for teachers. The Teacher education forum published its development programme for teacher education at the end of 2016. The term of this forum has been continued and is now 2020-2022.

For monitoring the development at national level, CPD has been included in the national teacher data collection commissioned on a regular basis. The most recent data collection was carried out in in spring 2019 and its results are reported in spring 2020.

Organisational Aspects

Continuing teacher education (CPD) is organised by different types of training centres such as university continuing education units, vocational teacher education colleges, university departments of teacher education, teacher training schools, summer universities and various private organisations.

Continuing education is largely based on the logic of supply and demand. The number of applications for continuing education programmes focusing on the priorities of education policy is considerably higher than the capacity for funding such programmes.

Continuing education and training have been divided into the following forms on the basis of the
responsible decision-making bodies:

- Self-motivated CPD,
- employer-funded CPD,
- state-funded CPD linked to education policy and priorities.

CPD is considered the responsibility of both the teachers themselves and their employers. Teachers have the responsibility and power of decision for participating in the education and they may receive support from society in the form of various study grants. Teachers especially favour continuing education that helps them update their professional knowledge in their own subject or field of vocational education and training.

Employer-funded CPD is funded by the employer and takes place during working hours. This type of CPD can be for individual teachers or for the whole teaching personnel in a school or municipality.

Education that is important in terms of education policy and priorities is funded by the State. The budget for continuing professional training (CPD) for education personnel is allocated through a tendering process administered by the Finnish National Agency for Education. Municipalities, joint municipal authorities, universities, polytechnics, special needs institutions, teacher training schools and other institutions that possess the required special expertise in the field of education and training can apply for these funds.

The state-funded CPD for 2020 focuses on the following themes:

- Leadership and strengthening individual development
- Promoting equity and equality
- Promoting participation, well-being and safety in learning communities, including honour-based violence
- Renewing support for learning and individual study paths
- Strengthening assessment competences and quality assurance
- Strengthening cultural and language competences
- Increasing equity in digitalisation
- Strengthening sustainable life-styles, including sustainable development
- Strengthening the identification and recognition of continuous learning
- Sexuality and equality education

The budget for this state-funded CPD in 2020 is 12 million euro.

**Incentives for Participation in Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Activities**

Participation in continuing professional development activities does not provide teachers with formal benefits, such as salary increases or promotions. Part of the CPD is compulsory, but studies show that teachers participate in CPD much more than are formally required. Thus the main motivation is professional development, updating and renewing one’s own knowledge and competences as well as professional well-being.
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